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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/859,684	05/17/2001	Marko Hahn	MICRONAS.6232	4058

7590 04/05/2004
Samuels, Gauthier & Stevens LLP
225 Franklin Street, Suite 3300
Boston, MA 02110

EXAMINER

YENKE, BRIAN P

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2614

DATE MAILED: 04/05/2004

9

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/859,684

Applicant(s)

HAHN ET AL.

Examiner

BRIAN P. YENKE

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on RCE /Amendment (25 November 2003).
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 2 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 2 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after allowance or after an Office action under *Ex Parte Quayle*, 25 USPQ 74, 453 O.G. 213 (Comm'r Pat. 1935). Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, prosecution in this application has been reopened pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 25 November 2003 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Schamel et al., DE-3617827 (applicant's cited prior art).

In considering claim 2,

a) the claimed receiving a picture signal... is met where a video signal is received (b) in which a measurement sample is formed consisting of a certain number of pixels in a line

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or in several lines in an arbitrary planar pattern (abstract), where the pattern includes regions as that in Fig a.

b) the claimed for the at least one detected homogeneous picture region... is met where the pattern is subjected to high-pass filtering (abstract) in order to eliminate the DC component.

c) the claimed determining the noise contained in the picture... is met where the difference amplitude of the high-pass filtered signal is determined and evaluated from a certain gray value (abstract).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Baatz et al., US 2001/0055421 in view of Ward et al., US 5,329,311.

In considering claim 2,

a) the claimed receiving a picture signal... is met by step 300 (Get Picture Objects) Fig 5, where the picture objects received are processed for homogeneity comparison (Fig 1) where in step 140 where is determined whether the picture objects conform to the homogeneity criterion tolerance selected in step 120 (Fig 1).

However Baatz, does not explicitly disclose measuring a high-frequency signal component or determining the noise contained in the picture from the high-frequency signal component and providing a noise signal indicative thereof.

Baatz discloses a method, which iteratively segments a digital picture to determine if one the picture elements/segments conform or do not conform based on a specific homogeneity criterion and then merging the conforming objects. Baatz discloses that this method is very well suited for semantic classification of the entire picture regardless if the picture is highly textured or noisy.

Regarding the high pass filtering (step b) and the determining the noise in the picture from the high pass filtered step (step c) both of which are conventional in the art.

Thus the examiner incorporates Ward, which discloses that since TV pictures have frequencies concentrated in the central portion of the spectrum and do not spread to the very high frequency portion, a high pass filter (106) is used to obtain the random noise within the picture.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Baatz which discloses a method to obtain the homogeneity of a picture by also filtering/determining the amount of noise present in the picture, in order to provide a noise-free picture.

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claim 1 is allowed. For Reasons for Allowance, please refer to Notice of Allowance (Paper #6).

Conclusion

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure—please refer to newly cited references on attached form PTO-892.

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Brian Yenke whose telephone number is (703) 305-9871. The examiner work schedule is Monday-Thursday, 0730-1830 hrs.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's Supervisor, John W. Miller, can be reached at (703)305-4795.

Any response to this action should be mailed to:

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Washington, D.C. 20231

or faxed to:

(703) 872-9314

Hand-delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park II, 2121 Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA, Sixth Floor (Receptionist). Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Technology Center 2600 Customer Service Office whose telephone number is (703)305-HELP.

General information about patents, trademarks, products and services offered by the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), and other

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related information is available by contacting the USPTO's General Information Services Division at:

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(FAX) 703-305-7786

(TDD) 703-305-7785

An automated message system is available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day providing informational responses to frequently asked questions and the ability to order certain documents. Customer service representatives are available to answer questions, send materials or connect customers with other offices of the USPTO from 8:30 a.m. - 8:00p.m. EST/EDT, Monday-Friday excluding federal holidays.

For other technical patent information needs, the Patent Assistance Center can be reached through customer service representatives at the above numbers, Monday through Friday (except federal holidays) from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. EST/EDT.

General information brochures can also be obtained in person from the Patent Search Room located in Crystal Plaza 3, Room 1A03, 2021 South Clark Place, Arlington, VA 22202.

The Patent Electronic Business Center (EBC) allows USPTO customers to retrieve data, check the status of pending actions, and submit information and applications. The tools currently available in the Patent EBC are Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) and the Electronic Filing System (EFS).

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PAIR (<http://pair.uspto.gov>) provides customers direct secure access to their own patent application status information, as well as to general patent information publicly available. EFS allows customers to electronically file patent application documents securely via the Internet. EFS is a system for submitting new utility patent applications and pre-grant publication submissions in electronic publication-ready form. EFS includes software to help customers prepare submissions in extensible Markup Language (XML) format and to assemble the various parts of the application as an electronic submission package. EFS also allows the submission of Computer Readable Format (CRF) sequence listings for pending biotechnology patent applications, which were filed in paper form.



B.P.Y.
31 March 2004



BRIAN P. YENKE
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2614